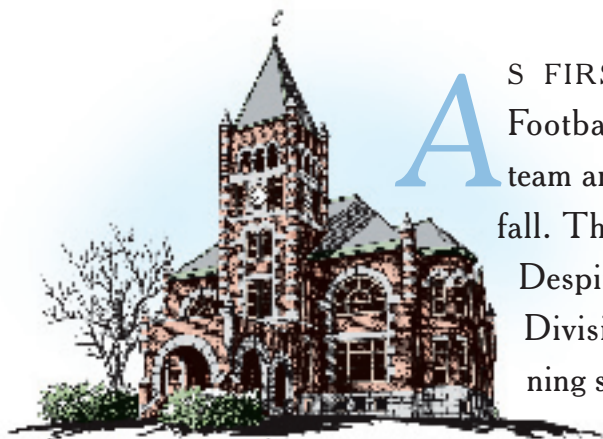


The View from T-Hall

Champions All

By President Ann Weaver Hart



AS FIRST-TIME WINNERS OF THE ATLANTIC 10 Football Conference championship, the UNH football team and its coaches enjoyed the exhilaration of victory this fall. They also experienced the disappointment of defeat. Despite their close loss to Northern Iowa in the NCAA Division IAA Quarterfinals, which brought their winning season to an end, they worked hard for, and enjoyed, enormous success. UNH alumni and students share great pride in this team—and all of UNH’s teams. As I write this column at the beginning of the spring semester, our women’s ice hockey team is number one in the nation. No matter what time of year it is, there are always teams at UNH we can cheer about.

Our cheering doesn’t stop in the stands, however: Our student-athletes are as successful in the classroom and the laboratory as they are on the playing field. And while the spotlight shined brightly on our football players this fall, both academic excellence as well as a record of service to the community are long and consistent traditions among all athletes at UNH.

Their dedication to rigorous academic study, as well as their enormous commitment to athletic competition, demonstrates the quality and caliber of our student-athletes. We expect athletic and academic achievement to go hand in hand, and our student-athletes consistently rise to the challenge.

This past summer, America East announced that UNH had more student-athletes on its Winter/Spring Academic Honor Roll than any other conference member. This followed the same distinction announced for its fall honor roll and for the preceding year as well. A total of 132 UNH student-athletes were named to the most recent America East Winter/Spring Academic Honor Roll—132 student-athletes boasting a 3.0 grade point average or higher. Sixty-two UNH students with grade point averages of 3.5 or higher earned further academic recognition by being named to the Commissioner’s Honor Roll.

The UNH student-athlete graduation rate is historically among the top 15 to 20 Division I schools. *U.S. News & World Report* took that into account, as well as grade point average and win-loss records, when it named UNH as one of the top 20 athletic departments in the country in 2002. And I am pleased that UNH boasts a 90 percent graduation rate among

its student-athletes, which far exceeds the national average of about 55 percent.

The scope of our student-athletes’ scholarship rivals that of some of the university’s most accomplished students. A number of students also volunteer to tutor other students. Hockey player Brad Flaishans ’07 serves as a peer academic adviser for younger students, assisting them with time management, course selection and making the most of their education in the Whittemore School of Business and Economics.

UNH students are as active in the community as they are in the classroom and on the playing field. Following the devastation of Hurricane Katrina, UNH athletes turned out in full force to host a number of sporting events and tournaments and emerged as major players in the universitywide fund-raising effort. Every intercollegiate team participated, and together these students became a funding force that contributed nearly 25 percent of the \$17,000 raised across the university. When the community comes to campus, UNH student-athletes are often here to welcome them. This was the case at the annual holiday party, when UNH athletes took to the ice to mix and mingle with some of the community’s youngest citizens.

No matter what the season’s outcomes for each of our intercollegiate and club sports, UNH produces champions, a word best defined by boxer Muhammad Ali: “Champions aren’t made in the gyms. Champions are made from something they have deep inside them—a desire, a dream, a vision.” We all benefit from the passion and skill of our Wildcat student-athletes. ~